



AOT in Action

TOURISM WORKS FOR ARIZONA!

Issue 103 – April 10, 2006

Welcome to AOT in Action, your weekly e-newsletter from the Arizona Office of Tourism (AOT).

A Message from the Director:

Good morning.

I just returned from a trip to Dallas to attend the Travel Industry Association of America (TIA) annual board meeting. TIA is currently undertaking an unprecedented, industry-wide effort, the *Diplomacy Through Tourism* campaign. This multi-faceted, integrated campaign will unite our industry, showing its importance and viability to top policymakers and leading the way in developing a global destination marketing campaign. Travel and tourism is a 1.3 trillion dollar industry in this country, with domestic and international travelers spending an estimated 646 billion dollars in the United States in 2005. These numbers clearly show the importance of travel and tourism in America. Although this campaign will take dedication and a sustained commitment, I am positive that we will all be able to work together to ensure a strong, vibrant industry and a strong, vibrant America. Already, we have seen tremendous excitement about these activities, and this board meeting was the best attended in TIA's history. I urge you to learn more about what we can do to further the campaign goals in the coming months.

Have a good week.

Margie A. Emmermann
Director
Arizona Office of Tourism

AOT News Flash

Help Us Reach You!

The Arizona Office of Tourism will be releasing a new printed communications newsletter to help disseminate quarterly research data, AOT news and information and valuable industry updates. Crossroads will be distributed in early April, and AOT is currently updating its database with physical addresses. To help us get the news to you, please send your address updates to Loretta Belonio at lbelonio@azot.gov. For more information about the newsletter, please contact Michelle Thompson at (602) 364-3724 or mthompson@azot.gov.

Presentation in Camp Verde

Six Arizona Council for Enhancing Tourism and Recreation (ACERT) representatives presented the Arizona Community Tourism Assessment Report to the Town of Camp Verde on Thursday evening, April 6, 2006, at the Lodge at Cliff Castle Casino. Kathy Andereck, Arizona State University at the West Campus; Karen Bult, Arizona Office of Tourism; Cheryl Cothran and Tom Combrink from the School of Hotel and Restaurant Management; Lisa Henderson, Arizona Department of Commerce; and Michael Leyva, Arizona Office of Tourism, presented the Assessment Report that included both short- and long-term recommendations for tourism development for Camp Verde. The report is an integral component of the Rural Community Assessment Program (RCAP) which provides technical assistance to communities with their tourism planning and development. For more information on ACERT or RCAP please contact Karen Bult at (602) 364-3708 or kbult@azot.gov.

Make the Visitors' First Impression a Grand One!

The Arizona Office of Tourism is pleased to announce the FY 06 Grand Impressions workshops series. These workshops are a full day of education and training designed to empower tourism professionals by offering a Customer Service Training Program featuring: "How to Host International Visitors," a presentation on Arizona tourism attractions, and a mini-familiarization tour of an attraction in the workshop host's area, designed to provide first-hand knowledge of exciting Arizona destinations. The workshops are offered free of charge to travel counselors and hospitality professionals across the state. All workshops will be held from 8:15 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Lunch will be provided. Below is a list of the Grand Impressions workshops for this year:

Bullhead City	April 13, 2006
Holbrook	April 27, 2006
Payson	April 28, 2006
Mesa	May 5, 2006
Sierra Vista	May 12, 2006

Space is limited! To register, please contact Sarah Martins, Travel Counselor at the Arizona Office of Tourism, at (602) 364-3687 or smartins@azot.gov.

Trippin' with AOT

AOT on the Road: Visiting Rural Tourism Development Grant Recipients



AOT staff recently visited two FY 06 Rural Tourism Development Grant (RTDGP) Award winners. The first stop was the 1891 2nd Courthouse in Pinal County. Pinal County received \$50,000 to repair a severely damaged area of the roof of the 1891 Second Pinal County Courthouse located in Florence. This repair project is part of a larger effort to rehabilitate the entire building. The second stop was the White Mountain Apache Tribe. Their Heritage Program received \$40,875 in funding to contract with local providers for installation of electrical outlets, asphalt paving and striping, concrete curb-stops and picnic tables at Fort Apache. For more information, contact Karen Bult at (602) 364-3708 or kbult@azot.gov.

Picket Post Recreation Area Update

AOT staff attended the Picket Post Recreation Area Steering Committee in Superior. The Picket Post Recreation Area Steering Committee is a collaboration of federal, state and local government entities, interest groups and organizations. The Steering Committee for the proposed Picket Post Recreation Area will build and promote a collaborative vision for enhancing visitor experience in and around Picket Post Mountain Area by providing enhanced recreation facilities and opportunities; providing multilevel interpretation and restoration of historic and cultural site; providing opportunities for eco-tourism and growth to local economies; and by providing responsible land management for the sustainability of natural resources. The next committee meeting will take place on May 16th at 10 a.m. in Superior. For more information, please contact Karen Bult, Tourism Development Manager, (602) 364-3708 or kbult@azot.gov.

Industry News

Summer Travel on the Minds of Americans

A recent survey by TIA/Synovate reveals that Americans are ready for a summer vacation. Over 80 percent of Americans planning to travel this summer have already started planning their longest trip and 30 percent are planning earlier than they did last year. In fact, 38 percent of those planning to take a summer trip have decided on or booked their mode of transportation, while 21 percent have already arranged lodging at their destination. Strong air and hotel demand has resulted in higher prices and fewer

bargains, possibly prompting travelers to act earlier to lock in the best prices. (3/31, eNewsline)

2006 Cactus League Spring Training News

About 1.2 million fans attended a Cactus League game last month, about 100,000 fewer than last year. Cactus League President J.P. de la Montaigne said eight games were canceled due to rain and for a few days spring training had to compete with the World Baseball Classic games in terms of spectator interest. Some of the WBC's first round games were played in Phoenix and Scottsdale. There may be more Cactus League teams to watch next year, as at least four Grapefruit League teams are thinking about leaving Florida to play spring ball in Arizona. Those teams include the Baltimore Orioles, Cleveland Indians, Cincinnati Reds, Houston Astros and perhaps even the Florida Marlins. Glendale, Goodyear and Casa Grande are all working on deals to land one of the teams for their respective communities. For more: www.cactusleague.com. (Phoenix Business Journal, 4/3, www.bizjournals.com)

JetBlue Offering Comfort Items, Snacks on Cross-Country Flights

Passengers grabbing the next JetBlue red-eye flight from Phoenix to New York's JFK International Airport are in for a little pampering. JetBlue Airways Corp. is offering those passengers kits that contain eye masks, earplugs, moisturizer and a promotional offer from the Bliss spa company. The kits are distributed only on flights between Western states and the East Coast. The Forest Hills, N.Y.-based airline also offers a self-serve pantry filled with snacks and hot towels, as part of its "Shut-Eye" service. JetBlue hopes the service will help fill more seats. For more: www.blissworld.com/jetblue. (Phoenix Business Journal, 4/4, www.bizjournals.com)

Arizona Wine Selected for White House Sandra Day O'Connor Tribute

The White House has selected two Arizona growers to supply the wine that will be served at the Sandra Day O'Connor tribute dinner on April 12, 2006, in Washington, D.C. Willcox area winery, Dos Cabezas Wineworks, will provide the white wine with their 2004 Pinot Gris, made from 100 percent Pinot Grigio fruit grown on the estate vineyard owned by Al Buhl and Sam Pillsbury. Wine Spectator magazine has recognized Dos Cabezas many times, consistently ranking their wines among the best produced in the United States. Sunset magazine selected the 2003 Toscano as their wine club selection in 2005. (Arizona Wine Growers Association press release, 4/4)

Greater Phoenix Convention and Visitors Bureau Announces 2006 Annual Meeting

The Greater Phoenix CVB will hold its 2006 Annual Meeting on May 18 at the Arizona Biltmore Resort & Spa in Phoenix. The event's guest speaker will be Peter C. Yesawich, Chairman & CEO, YPB&R. Steve Moore, GPCVB President & CEO, will give the

annual update. To register, call (602) 452-6275 or online at www.visitphoenix.com/annualmeeting.

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